

CONFIDENTIAL

59

2

EASTERN EUROPEAN INTELLIGENCER OCI #0676/68
3 January 1968US Embassy in Prague Obtains Speeches of Dissident Writers

The embassy has obtained on loan a booklet entitled "Proceedings of the Fourth Congress of the Czechoslovak Writers' Union, June 27-29, 1967." The booklet apparently was published in a limited edition of only several hundred copies which were issued to members of the union. A comparison of the "Proceedings" with speeches in the Embassy's possession suggest that the booklet contains the complete and unexpurgated texts of the 44 speeches made at the congress. One of the texts included is that of Ludvik Vaculik, who attacked the Czechoslovak political system. [REDACTED]

25X1

COMMENT: It is unclear just when the booklet was issued. Most of the arrogant and challenging speeches by dissident intellectuals at the congress have previously been widely circulated inside the country. The regime has attempted to isolate the outspoken dissidents by characterizing their views as radical, and untypical of the views of the majority of the writers' union membership. However, dissemination of the booklet now might rally additional support for the dissidents at a time when they appear to be coming out of their shells to press for reform.

Rumors of Polish Leadership Shifts Increase

The latest in the round of rumors concerns the retirement "later this month or early February" of Chief of State Ochab, and his replacement by Premier Cyrankiewicz. The latter's successor as premier would be politburo member Edward Gierek, present party boss and "czar" of economically important Silesia. Rumors also continue that Gomulka himself will step down at the party congress scheduled for later this year.

Other speculation alludes to additional changes of jobs for personnel at lower levels of the government and party. Some of the changes which have occurred in recent weeks are said to be provisional, a fact which may indicate indecision pending possible shifts at the top. [REDACTED]

25X1

GROUP I
EXCLUDED FROM AUTOMATIC DOWN-
GRADING AND DECLASSIFICATION

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

-2-

COMMENT: Except for the omission of speculation concerning Defense Minister Spychalski, these rumors are substantially similar to those which have been circulating in Warsaw for over a year. Although Gomulka clearly will not "step down," some changes in the leadership may be in the offing as the party boss seeks to remedy party instability caused by the Middle East crisis and by more recent economic problems.

The ailing Ochab's retirement may indeed have been long delayed because of political problems in choosing a successor. Both Cyrankiewicz and Spychalski have been mentioned in this context. In either case, such a move would create a major political vacuum. Gierek, whose administrative competence is unchallenged and whose relative popularity stems from his shunning factional disputes, might be called to Warsaw in some major economic capacity. This too, however, would create a succession problem in Silesia.

Tito and Ceausescu Meeting in Belgrade

Rumanian party chief Nicolae Ceausescu and Yugoslav leader Tito are meeting in Belgrade today. Ceausescu is accompanied by premier Maurer and party ideologue Niculescu-Mizil.

25X1
25X1

COMMENT: The main topic of discussion undoubtedly will be the world Communist consultative meeting scheduled for Budapest in February. Although both leaders probably will deny the validity and usefulness of the meeting, which they have long opposed as restricting the independence of communist parties, their rejections probably will be delivered separately and not in a joint statement. The two regimes carried on similar consultations before their individual refusals to attend the April 1967 meeting of European Communist parties at Karlovy Vary.

Hungarian Premier Vacations in East Germany

Hungarian Premier Jeno Fock arrived in East Germany for a "vacation" on 2 January. Fock and his wife were met at the railroad station by GDR Premier Willi Stoph who later hosted a dinner in honor of the Hungarian visitors.

25X1

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

-3-

COMMENT: Fock normally vacations at this time every year and may have received encouragement from the East Germans to visit the GDR this time. He may find it difficult, however, to avoid mixing business with pleasure because the East Germans will probably raise the subject of Fock's widely disseminated remarks last November when the Hungarian Premier evinced a less stringent line on recognition of West Germany.

Yugoslavs Will Not Be Invited to Budapest Meeting

A working group will soon extend invitations to the 81 communist parties which attended the 1960 Moscow conference to attend the February 1968 consultative meeting in Budapest, according to a Yugoslav diplomat in Belgrade. Since the Yugoslavs did not attend the 1960 meeting, they will not be invited to next month's gathering. The source added, however, that the Yugoslavs are not disappointed by their exclusion. Belgrade opposes such meetings, but reportedly has refrained from making an unequivocal public statement to avoid isolation within the communist movement.

25X1

Rumanian Government Delegation Slated to Visit Rome

Rumanian Premier Maurer and Foreign Minister Manescu are slated to pay an official visit to Rome on 17 January, according to the Italian Ambassador in Bucharest. Scheduled to last two or three days, the visit will repay Premier Fanfani's trip to Rumania last August.

25X1

COMMENT: The most specific agreement likely to stem from the visit is a tourism protocol, which the Rumanians want but which the Italians consider meaningless. Italo-Rumanian negotiations on claims against the Rumanians for nationalization of Italian property following World War II are unlikely to be concluded in time for signature during the visit.

25X1

NOTE: THE VIEWS EXPRESSED ABOVE REPRESENT
ONLY THE ANALYSIS OF THE EE DIVISION

CONFIDENTIAL